

MINUTES

CABINET

9 FEBRUARY 2016

Present:

Members:

Councillors: Williams (Leader)
Griffiths (Deputy
Leader)
Harden
Marshall
G Sutton

Officers:	Sally Marshall	Chief Executive
	James Deane	Corporate Director - Finance and Operations
	Steven Baker	Assistant Director - Chief Executive's Unit
	Robert Smyth	Assistant Director - Performance & Projects
	Nicholas Brown	Group Manager - Commercial Assets & Property Development
	Julie Still	Group Manager - Resident Services
	Jim Doyle	Group Manager - Democratic Services
	Jim Guiton	CCTV / Community Control Centre Team Leader

The meeting began at 7.30 pm

CA/11/15 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 January 2016 were agreed by the members present and signed by the Chairman.

CA/12/15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology was received on behalf of Councillor Elliot.

CA/13/15 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received

CA/14/15 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None received

CA/15/15 REFERRALS TO CABINET

None received

CA/16/15 CABINET FORWARD PLAN

That the Cabinet Forward Plan be noted, subject to the following additions:

March	Waterhouse Street Traffic Regulation Order Sickness Absence Management Review
April	Housing Acquisition Policy
June	Housing Asset Management Strategy
October	Homelessness Strategy Review

CA/17/15 BUDGET AND COUNCIL TAX SETTING

Resolved to recommend:

General Fund Revenue Estimate

- a) a Dacorum Borough Council General Fund Council Tax requirement of £10.218m, and of £10.908m for the combined Borough Council and Parish Councils' requirement for 2016/17;**
- b) an increase of 2.78% in Council Tax for Dacorum Borough Council;**
- c) the base estimates for 2016/17, as shown in Supplementary Appendix A1,* and the indicative budget forecasts for 2016/17 – 2019-20, as shown in Supplementary Appendix A2;**
- d) the forecast balances of the Revenue Reserves as shown in the Supplementary Appendix J, and approve paragraphs 10-20 of the Cabinet report as the updated Reserves Strategy.**
- e) approve increases in Fees and Charges for 2016/17 as set out in Appendices C3, D3, and E3**
- f) approve and adopt the Treasury Management Strategy for 2016/17, attached at Appendix K;**
- g) approve and adopt the Treasury Management Principles and Practices for 2016/17, attached at Appendix L;**
- h) note that this budget paper, when approved by Council, will form part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy**

Four Year Settlement

- i) delegate approval to the Corporate Director (Finance & Operations) in consultation with Budget Review Group to decide on whether to accept Government's offer of a four-year finance settlement.**

Capital Programme

- j) approve the revised Capital Programme for 2015/16, and for 2016/17 to 2020/21, as detailed in Appendix I;
- k) approve the financing proposals in Appendix I subject to an annual review of the financing options by the Corporate Director (Finance & Operations), in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources, during the preparation of the Statement of Accounts.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

- l) reduce dwelling rents by 1% in accordance with government legislation, resulting in an average rent of £105.19 per week (based on 52 weeks);
- m) approve the HRA estimate for 2016/17 as shown in Appendix F.

Terms & Conditions

- n) approve the continued application of a living wage supplement for all affected employees, in accordance with the rates of the Living Wage Foundation, for 2016/17 (to be reviewed annually thereafter).

Statement by Chief Finance Officer

- o) approve the statement by the Chief Finance Officer regarding the robustness of the budget estimates and level of reserves as set out in Appendix M.

(* Appendices can be found in the reports considered at Cabinet.)

Reason for Decision

To present to Cabinet budget proposals for recommendation to Council in relation to:

- Revenue and Capital Expenditure together with the potential use of reserves
- The setting of the Council Tax for 2016/17
- The Treasury Management Strategy 2016/17
- The level of fees and charges for 2016/17
- Advice to Councillors on the robustness of the Budget proposals and adequacy of balances and reserves as required by the Local Government Act 2003

Implications

Financial & Value for Money
Contained within the body of the report

Risk Implications

Budget Risk Assessment completed within report (Appendix M)

Corporate Objectives

All of the Council's corporate objectives are reflected in the Budget proposals.

Advice

The Corporate Director for Finance and Operations explained that following issue of the Final Local Government Finance Settlement on 8 February 2016, supplementary recommendations were therefore being recommended to Cabinet. Each recommendation listed in the supplementary report to Cabinet supersedes the recommendations of the same letter within the original Cabinet Report. All other recommendations in the Cabinet Report remain extant and are not superseded by the supplementary recommendations.

In addition he added that on 17 December 2015, the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement for 2016/17 was announced. The Provisional Settlement formed the basis for the Council's draft 2016/17 budget, which was scrutinised by Joint Overview & Scrutiny on 2 February 2016, and was subsequently published within the current Cabinet Report.

On 8 February 2016, the *Final* Local Government Finance Settlement for 2016/17 was announced, which contained a number of significant amendments from the provisional Settlement.

He noted that there could still be amendments required regarding the reduction in council rents and therefore a further paper to Cabinet may be required in February to be considered at a meeting immediately prior to Full Council.

The Chief Executive asked where the council would stand if the Bill was not an Act by the time the rent rates needed to be approved.

The Corporate Director for Finance and Operations said the council would be kept up to date with the options to be considered.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing felt that if the Bill was not an Act by the 1st April 2016, then the proposals should not be implemented until the following year.

The Leader of the Council noted that the council was caught out with this a few years ago and had to act on the rent rates retrospectively, which was a very long and complicated process.

The Portfolio Holder for Environmental, Sustainability & Regulatory Services said that the council had to give a certain amount of weeks' notice to its tenants about what their rent would be for the next financial year.

The Corporate Director for Finance and Operations said that Full Council will be asked to approve a 'best guess' rate which the tenants will be billed for. The council would have to act accordingly if this rate was subsequently amended.

The Leader of the Council said that there could be difficult challenges and decisions over the next few years to bridge the £4.2 mil gap.

Voting

None.

CA/18/15 SENIOR OFFICER PAY POLICY

Resolved to recommend:

- (1) to adopt the Pay Policy for 2016/17 as set out in appendix 1 to the Cabinet report.**
- (2) That any amendments to the Pay Policy throughout the financial year 2016/2017 which are required as a result of legislative changes can be approved by the Chief Executive in conjunction with the Council's Monitoring Officer .**

Reason for Decision

To set the Council's pay policy for the financial year 2016/17, as required by Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011.

Implications

Equality Implications

The Pay Policy Statement adheres to national guidance on pay equality.

Risk Implications

There needs to be a robust procedure in place to ensure transparency of information and equality in staffing costs and remuneration.

Health & Safety

No implications from this report.

Corporate Objectives

The Council's policies in respect of pay and terms and conditions support all five of the Council's strategic objectives as part of ensuring that services to the community can be delivered to the required standards and with due regard to economy, efficiency and effectiveness

Advice

The Portfolio Holder for Residents & Corporate Services explained that the Senior Officer Pay Policy has been refreshed for 2016/2017 in line with the Localism Act 2011 requirements. The main changes are:

- The amendment to the leadership structure following retirement of the Assistant Director Chief Executive's Unit.
- A section on additional payments for deputising Statutory Officers
- Additional information on election fees
- A note on the possible imposed a cap on 'exit payments' which can be made to public sector employees who leave voluntarily and the implications this

may have on the pay policy.

The Chief Executive highlighted that paragraph 11 within the report should be amended to read that 'these changes are proposed to take effect from 1 May and not 1 June'. She added that paragraph 4 of appendix 1 related to section 8.8 of the policy.

The Leader of the Council asked how the new national living wage fitted in the DBC pay scales.

The Corporate Director for Finance and Operations explained that the national living wage would be £8.20 so the council pay scales would reflect this.

The Leader of the Council noted that this would mean that council staff would be on a band 3 at least.

Consultation

Consultation took place with:

- Sally Marshall (Chief Executive)

Voting

None.

CA/19/15 CCTV CODE OF PRACTICE

Decision

That the CCTV Code of Practice be approved.

Reason for Decision

To inform the Cabinet of the proposed Dacorum Borough Council Code of Practice which sets out the principles that should apply to all surveillance camera systems in public places to meet the mandatory requirement pursuant to Section 30 (1) (a) of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 and to seek approval for the implementation of the code.

Implications

Financial

Within existing budgets

Risk Implications

The intention of this report is to comply with legislation and therefore avoid the risk of non-compliance.

Corporate Objectives

Clean and Safe Environment

Dacorum Delivers

Advice

The Portfolio Holder for Residents & Corporate services introduced the report explaining that the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 brought with it the first specific legislation relating to the use of CCTV systems by Public Bodies. The Bill introduces a mandatory code of practice for surveillance camera systems and a new regulator, the Surveillance Camera Commissioner. The Surveillance Camera Commissioners code of practice sets out 12 guiding principles which strike a balance between protecting the public and upholding civil liberties. This code will help to demonstrate a robust operating environment with the additional benefit of reassurance to the public that Dacorum Borough Council's CCTV system is operated responsibly and effectively, and the likelihood of any breach of individual privacy is greatly reduced.

The CCTV/Community Control Centre Team Leader added that the report was a combination of the commissioner's report and guidance received and how the council would go about implementing it.

The Portfolio Holder for Environmental, Sustainability & Regulatory Services asked what the councillor's local vetting procedures were.

The CCTV/Community Control Centre Team Leader explained that all operators would go through the normal process of having DBS checks. If they go for a SIA licence this would involve a second 'more enhanced' check.

A SIA licence allows someone to work in the industry, for example in security work whereas working in the CCTV control room was a more highly confidential role.

The Leader of the council asked what the procedure was if somebody wanted to access the system/footage to use as evidence, and was there a charge for this.

The CCTV/Community Control Centre Team Leader replied that Freedom of Information requests did not apply to CCTV. If the footage has been handed over to the Police then the council cannot provide it and a solicitor would need to make the request. As part of the data action request, someone can only ask for footage of themselves and not of a third party, only insurance companies or investigators can request this.

The council may charge for this service and is currently looking at other council's for best practice.

Consultation

Consultation took place with:

- James Deane, Corporate Director, Finance & Operations
- Dave Austin, Assistant Director, Neighbourhood Delivery
- Legal services
- Environmental Health
- Housing

Voting

None.

CA/20/15 ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Decision

That the implementation of the Asset Management Strategy as detailed in the Cabinet report be approved.

Reason for Decision

For Cabinet to review and approve the implementation of the proposed Asset Management Strategy.

Implications

Financial

The Council has a significant and varied portfolio of assets which provide an income stream that is crucial to the delivery of the Council's corporate objectives.

Value for Money

The implementation of this Asset Management Strategy will provide improved structure to asset governance and performance management. This in turn will improve the Council's decision-making and support and enhance existing income streams.

Risk Implications

A robust Asset Management Strategy (AMS) mitigates the risk of the Council not being able to deliver the benefits described above.

Corporate Objectives

Efficient management of the Council's assets is essential for the effective delivery of all corporate objectives.

Advice

The Group Manager for Commercial Assets and Property Development explained that the Asset Management Strategy was originally produced by the property consultants EC Harris in consultation with senior officers across the Council and submitted to Cabinet on 21 January 2014.

This has subsequently been updated by officers in response to the changing value of the asset profile of the Council, the creation of a Property Management Board and the presentation of a specific Disposal Strategy for assets. The objective of the strategy is to assist the Council to manage the performance of its assets as efficiently as possible in support of its corporate priorities.

The Strategy was considered by the Finance & Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 13 January 2016 and by the Corporate Management Team. Some minor amendments have been made as a result of comments received.

The Portfolio Holder for Environmental, Sustainability & Regulatory Services asked why the footnote shown on page 76 of the agenda implied that public conveniences had all been closed; she believed some are still open.

The Group Manager for Commercial Assets and Property Development said that this footnote was incorrect and would be amended.

Consultation

Consultation took place with:

- Senior Officers across the Council
- Finance & Resources Committee

Voting

None.

CA/21/15 CORPORATE PLAN

Decision

Resolved to recommend:

- 1. the Corporate Plan 2015 to 2020 for adoption**

Reason for Decision

To seek Cabinet approval for the referral of the Council's new Corporate Plan – 2015 to 2020 to Council for approval

Implications

Financial

The plan sets out the priorities and vision for the organisation over the next five years. As a result it will inform and shape the strategic and financial decision making process of the organisation, including our Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

Value for Money

A key priority within the plan is 'Delivering an Efficient and Modern Council'.

This will ensure that we focus on achieving the Council's savings and priorities while maintaining quality and protecting frontline services.

Risk Implications

Risk Assessment completed on 18th January

Risk 1

The plan sets out the priorities and vision for the Council over the next five years and frames the operational and financial planning.

Without a clear and considered document, there is a risk that we will start to work in a way that does not meet the expectations and needs of residents or Members.

Risk 2

The lack of a plan would increase uncertainty and makes it difficult for teams focus their attention and resources in the right area.

One of the key elements within a plan is to set out the priorities that the Council needs to address.

Risk 3

The plan also provides a series of key performance indicators enabling us to chart our progress.

Without an effective plan it is possible that we may be working in a way that causes duplication, waste or poor performance.

Corporate Objectives

The Corporate Plan will support all five of the Council's corporate objectives:

1. Clean and safe environment
2. Community capacity
3. Regeneration
4. Dacorum delivers
5. Affordable housing

It sets out the updated priorities for the Council.

Advice

The Leader of the Council said that the Corporate Plan sets out the priorities for the next few years and gives a focal point. The policies are ongoing and therefore the priorities were similar to previous years but do include projects for the future. He added that it would be made available online.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing asked if the council had sold 500 houses as previously it stated we owned 10,500 but now states 10,000.

The Chief Executive said the figure better reflected the situation over the 5 years of the plan. She also highlighted that the priority titles had been changed to reflect a more accessible and action-orientated plan.

The Leader of the Council pointed out some minor amendments to the table showing the previous priority titles. The Chief Executive agreed to have these altered.

The Portfolio Holder for Environmental, Sustainability & Regulatory Services referred to the 'About Dacorum' section of the plan and asked if the figures shown for

recycling, population and adventure playgrounds were for the calendar year or financial year for 2014. She asked if more current figures were available. It was noted that funding would be received for a specific year; however this plan covered a few years. She felt that the figure for funding shown in pounds and pence would be better shown as a percentage.

The Leader of the Council explained that the funding figures were an accurate reflection of the council's position and he felt that the figures were more meaningful shown in pounds and pence rather than a percentage. The Assistant Director for Performance and Projects noted that the figures were for 2014/15 and he would therefore look into 2015/16 figures.

The Leader of the council suggested including a footnote on the 'About Dacorum' page along with the others, to explain the dates the figures were obtained.

The Portfolio Holder for Environmental, Sustainability & Regulatory Services disagreed with the wording shown in the 'Looking Forward' section that 'the traditional view of the council as a one-stop provider of services is unrealistic' and felt 'one-stop' should be replaced. It was agreed that 'one stop' would be replaced with 'main'.

The Portfolio Holder for Environmental, Sustainability & Regulatory Services referred to the 'Building strong and vibrant communities' section and asked if indeed 'we' had delivered superfast broadband as it states, as she thought BT did this? The leader of the Council confirmed that BT did indeed lay the cables but DBC paid for it.

The Chief Executive suggested adding a publication date to the document, to illustrate when the figures were obtained. The Portfolio Holder for Planning & Regeneration felt that the picture of the Maylands Business Centre included in the plan was not very relevant to the text on the same page. The Portfolio Holder for Residents & Corporate Services noted that it referred to the text shown on the following page. The Assistant Director for performance and Projects would amend this illustration.

Consultation

Consultation took place with:

- Corporate Management Team
- Dacorum Borough Council Officers

Voting

None.

The Meeting ended at 8.13 pm